

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 SIG-03 PA-02 USIA-15 NSC-05 SP-02 DODE-00
SS-15 EUR-12 ARA-14 ISO-00 /079 R

DRAFTED BY AF/P:BARUSSELL:ADR
APPROVED BY AF/P:RWHOLLIDAY
-----032573 180249Z /66

R 170328Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
XMT AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

UNCLAS STATE 069036

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, MARCH 16, 1978

FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE NOON
BRIEFING, MARCH 16, 1978:

THE WHITE HOUSE WILL BE POSTING, OR ANNOUNCING SOON,
OFFICIALLY THAT THE PRESIDENT IS SENDING A SPECIAL EMISSARY
TO SOMALIA TO DISCUSS U.S.-SOMALIA RELATIONS IN THE
SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA FOLLOWING THE WITHDRAWAL
OF SOMALI TROOPS FROM THE OGADEN. THE EMISSARY WILL BE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, RICHARD MOOSE. HE WILL LEAVE WASHINGTON TODAY, LATER TODAY, AND SHOULD ARRIVE IN MOGADISHU LATER IN THE DAY TOMORROW.

HE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY A MEMBER OF THE NSC STAFF, PAUL HENZE, AND TWO OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE -- GERALD SCOTT, THE SOMALI DESK OFFICER, AND DANIEL SPIEGEL OF THE POLICY PLANNING STAFF.

THEIR DISCUSSIONS ARE EXPECTED TO COVER THE WHOLE RANGE OF U.S. SOMALI RELATIONS. THERE IS NO FIXED SCHEDULE. PRE-SUMABLY HE WILL BE THERE A DAY OR SO. I DO NOT HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON OTHER STOPS. THAT LEADS ME TO ASSUME,

PERHAPS INCORRECTLY, THAT THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR ANY OTHER STOPS AT THIS TIME. I DON'T KNOW OF ANY.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ON THAT, AND THEN I WILL GO ON

TO OTHER THINGS.

Q: HAVE YOU HAD ANY INDICATIONS, HODDING, FROM THE SOVIETS UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE

THAT IN FACT THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF FACILITATING THE WITHDRAWAL OF CUBANS THAT ARE IN ETHIOPIA?

A: WE HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND I AM NOT GOING TO GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THE CONVERSATION. THEY HAVE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED THEMSELVES ON THE SUBJECT OF THEIR PRESENCE THERE, AND WE HAVE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED OURSELVES ON OUR FEELING ABOUT IT, AND I THINK THAT IS ABOUT AS FAR AS I AM ABLE TO GO.

Q: DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT STAND ON THE FACT THAT WE HAVE HAD ASSURANCES FROM THE SOVIETS THAT THERE WOULD BE WITHDRAWALS OF CUBAN FORCES?

A: I DON'T RECALL THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAYING THAT.

Q: CAN WE PUT IT THIS WAY HODDING? TWO DOZEN REPORTERS LEARNED SIMULTANEOUSLY FRIDAY NIGHT THAT THE SOVIETS HAD GIVEN INDICATIONS, AND THE ACCOUNT IN THE NEW YORK TIMES THIS MORNING MAY HAVE OVERSTATED -- AT LEAST IT OVERSTATES WHAT I THINK WE ALL LEARNED SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND WHAT WE SIMULTANEOUSLY LEARNED IS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD WITHDRAW, WOULD INFLUENCE THEM. AT THE SAME TIME, ALL THESE REPORTERS LEARNED THAT A THOUSAND MORE CUBANS HAVE PILED INTO SOMALIS

SO, WITHOUT TRYING TO CHECK THE STATUS AGAINST ONE NEWSPAPER'S ACCOUNT, LET'S PUT ASIDE THE NEW YORK TIMES

TODAY AND JUST ASK YOU: FIVE DAYS OR SIX DAYS AFTER WE ALL LEARNED THIS, CAN YOU BRING US UP-TO-DATE ON THE CUBAN STRENGTH IN ETHIOPIA, AND WHETHER THE RUSSIANS ARE USING THEIR INFLUENCE TO TRY TO GET THE CUBANS TO COME OUT?

A: I CAN TELL YOU THAT SIX DAYS LATER, THE CUBAN PRESENCE -- AND I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GIVE NUMBERS -- IS NOT LESS AND IT IS PROBABLY SOMEWHAT GREATER. THAT UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE

IS THE BEST ANSWER I CAN GIVE YOU.

Q: DO YOU HAVE CONTINUING INDICATIONS, THAT THE SOVIETS WILL TRY TO PERSUADE THE CUBANS TO BRING SOME OF THOSE PEOPLE OUT?

A: WE HAVE CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON THIS SUBJECT, AND THAT CONVERSATION IS ON-GOING, AND I AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO CHARACTERIZE IT.

Q: HODDING, BACK SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY, THE UNITED STATES TENTATIVELY SAID IT WOULD SUPPLY DEFENSIVE ARMS TO SOMALIA AND THEN SUSPENDED THAT OFFER IN THE LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT EVENTS.

DOES DICK MOOSE PLAN TO NOW DISCUSS DELIVERY OF DEFENSIVE WEAPONS TO SOMALIA?

A: HE WILL DISCUSS THE ENTIRE RANGE OF ISSUES, MANY OF WHICH WERE OUTLINED BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS STATEMENT, AND CERTAINLY INCLUDING THAT POSSIBILITY AS AMONG THEM.

Q: HODDING, DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE ANY LESS EXPECTATION NOW THAN IT DID LAST WEEK ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE CUBAN PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA TO BE REDUCED NOW THAT THE SOMALIAN WITHDRAWAL HAS TAKEN PLACE?

A: I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING THAT I CAN OFFER YOU ON THAT AT THIS TIME. I DO NOT HAVE AN INFORMED GUESS TO GIVE YOU.

Q: IN THE PAST SIX DAYS, HAVE ANY SHIPS PUT TO SEA? IF YOU WILL RECALL, SIX DAYS AGO, THERE WERE REPORTS OF UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE

SHIPS BEARING UNKNOWN NUMBERS OF CUBANS, WHICH

PRESUMABLY ACCOUNT FOR YOUR SAYING THAT IT IS PROBABLY LARGER -- HAVE THERE BEEN ANY NEW SHIPMENTS?

A: I AM NOT AWARE OF SHIPS.

Q: HODDING, DO YOU HAVE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE CUBANS IN ETHIOPIA HAVE TURNED THEIR MILITARY MIGHT AGAINST THE ERITREANS OR AGAINST ANY OTHER GROUP THAT IS IN COMBAT INSIDE ETHIOPIA?

A: WHAT I KNOW IS, FRANKLY, WHAT I SEE IN THE WIRE, THAT THAT POSSIBILITY EXISTS, I HAVE SEEN IT REPORTED FROM THEM. I DO NOT KNOW THAT BY INDEPENDENT MEANS AVAILABLE TO ME.

Q: IS THERE STILL AN AIRLIFT OF EQUIPMENT FROM THE SOVIET UNION GOING INTO ETHIOPIA?

A: I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW. I WILL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q: COULD YOU FIND OUT WHEN IT STOPS?

Q: HODDING, IT WAS SAID HERE THURSDAY NIGHT ON THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR DIRECT QUOTATION BY SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE WATCHING FOR A SIGN OF SOVIET-CUBAN INTENTIONS, SPECIFICALLY ON WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY REINFORCEMENTS GOING INTO ETHIOPIA OF CUBAN TROOPS.

NOW, THE PROBLEM THAT IS DANGLING HERE IS WHETHER THE AUGMENTATION OF CUBAN TROOPS THAT HAS NOW TAKEN PLACE TO WHICH YOU REFER IS SOMETHING THAT WAS ON THE WAY PREVIOUSLY WHICH THE UNITED STATES EXPECTED TO BE ARRESTED, OR IF IT IS SOME NEW AUGMENTATION THAT WAS NOT KNOWN ABOUT AT THE TIME THAT THE FIGHTING STOPPED?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE

A: YES. ONE, OF COURSE, I THINK EVEN THAT WELL-KNOWN ANNOUNCER SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THAT WITHIN THE LAST 36 HOURS. SECOND, I AM SIMPLY NOT SURE THAT I AM GOING TO BE ABLE TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION, MURREY.

Q: HODDING, DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SOVIET TROOPS THERE, AND ALSO DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE CUBAN TROOPS ARE DOING IN ETHIOPIA?

A: WE DON'T HAVE ANYBODY ON THE GROUND THERE LOOKING AT THEM. I DON'T HAVE A BATTLEFIELD REPORT FOR YOU. THE SOVIET PRESENCE IS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, ROUGHLY THE SAME.

LET ME SAY THAT MY ANSWER ABOUT THE CUBANS -- BEFORE I SEE

SOME LEAD ON THIS -- WAS FAIRLY QUALIFIED. I SAID THAT I DID NOT HAVE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE ANY LESS AND THAT THERE MAY BE MORE. I AM NOT NOW GIVING YOU THE NOTION OF THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS INCREASE. I WAS TRYING

TO DEAL WITH THE OTHER SIDE OF THE QUESTION, WHICH WAS A REDUCTION.

Q: MOSCOW RADIO SAID TODAY THAT SOMALI LEADERS HAVE FAILED TO SHOW READINESS TO GIVE UP THEIR TERRITORIAL CLAIMS TO ETHIOPIA OR TO KENYA AND DJIBOUTI. HAVE YOU ANYTHING MORE ON WHETHER SIAD BARRE HAS ASSURED THE UNITED STATES THAT HE IS GIVING UP HIS CLAIMS?

A: I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE SUBJECT IS GOING TO BE AMONG THOSE DISCUSSED.

Q: HODDING, GIVEN THE PRESIDENT OF ANGOLA WHERE THE CUBANS UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID ONE TIME IN A FAMOUS LETTER TO OLAF PALME THAT THEY WERE PULLING OUT, AND THERE ARE MORE THERE NOW THAN BEFORE. ARE YOU CONFIDENT, OR DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMITMENT AT ALL FROM THE CUBANS THAT THEY WILL NOT STAY IN ETHIOPIA?

A: LET ME SAY THIS. WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE CUBANS. WE HAVE HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM. I AM NOT GOING TO CHARACTERIZE WHAT THOSE DISCUSSIONS HAVE INCLUDED.

Q: IS THE UNITED STATES INSISTING ON A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN FORCES, OR IS THERE A LEVEL OF CUBAN TROOPS TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT OBJECT?

A: I THINK OUR FORMULATION IS THE WITHDRAWAL OF OUTSIDE FIGHTING FORCES, AND THAT THIS IS PRETTY CLEAR. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY QUALIFIER ON IT.

Q: HODDING, IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES IS NOW RECONSIDERING ITS POSITION ON THE SUPPLY OF DEFENSIVE WEAPONS TO SOMALIA, DOES THAT ALSO MEAN THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS CHANGED ITS POLICY ON THE SUPPLY OF WEAPONS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION THAT MIGHT BE INCLINED TO SEND THEM?

A: I BELIEVE THAT THE STATEMENT YESTERDAY SAID THAT ASSUMING CERTAIN CONDITIONS WERE MET THAT WE WOULD ALSO SEE WHAT WE COULD DO TO HELP THEM FIND ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES AS WELL, ASSUMING THE CONDITIONS WERE MET THAT I OUTLINED AND THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS EVEN MORE EXPLICIT ON THAT THAN I WAS YESTERDAY.

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PAGE 08 STATE 069036 POSS DUPE

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PAGE 01 STATE 069036
ORIGIN ARA-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /005 R

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APPROVED BY:ARA/CCA:WSSMITH

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R 211000Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT HAVANA

UNCLAS STATE 069036

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 069036 SENT ACTION ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC
POST LONDON PARIS BONN MAR 17.
QUOTE UNCLAS STATE 069036

E.O. 11652:N/A

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Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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Secure: OPEN
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Subject: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, MARCH 16, 1978
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN
To: ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS LONDON MULTIPLE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
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